

FOOD TRUCK POLICY ADVISORY GROUP
OCTOBER 29, 2013 MEETING SUMMARY

The meeting was called to order at 6:10 p.m. Since this meeting was devoted to the feasibility of food trucks in the Carlyle area, the group offered its comments related to food trucks in the Carlyle area first. Group members noted that a number of businesses in Carlyle have closed because of lack of business, and that lunch business is off 30 percent. One member stated that food trucks can pose a security threat for the PTO and the Courthouse. It was noted that food trucks are allowed near the U.S. Department of State and the White House. They were also allowed at the Presidential Inauguration and at Dulles which has several high security locations. The final comment was that anything that will jeopardize the retail efforts of the property owners in Carlyle should not be supported. There was also a suggestion that maybe a food trucks rodeo on weekends could get the synergy needed to bring people to the area.

The meeting was then opened for public comments, which are summarized below.

- Secondary concerns are related to the on-site food facility at PTO and whether food trucks would take business away from that facility. The Shops at Eisenhower have proved to be very popular.
- Carlyle is very self-contained. Food trucks will not help the economic viability because they will cherry pick the customers. BRAC is an ideal location for food trucks. At night and weekends, Carlyle is a ghost town, with nothing to attract residents – weekend food truck rodeo is a viable idea.
- The City's assumption was that PTO's 9,000 employees would be a boon, but the truth is that most of the employees work on a per diem basis with flexible hours. If food trucks come, will any other businesses come into the community? Some space has been vacant since it was built in 2009.
- Every one of the restaurateurs has been reposted. Retail is under 50 percent. If businesses are impacted 10 - 15 percent, second generation businesses will fold. Weekend activities that attract people would be welcomed; however, we would need a measurable that can be put in place to determine whether there is an impact. Food trucks are fine for weekends and special events.
- Food trucks may create synergy, and Alexandria has a history of being small business friendly.
- Who will the food trucks benefit? Residents are not there during the day.
- Food trucks have been a proven draw. New restaurants shutdown other restaurants.

- Commercial property owners are cutting rent to lease retail space that is empty.
- The Advisory Group needs to consider who wants food trucks in Carlyle.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.